Chapter 6

Differences in Social Exchange Between Intimate and Other Relationships: Gradually Evolving or Quickly Apparent?

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Interpersonal attraction has long been of considerable interest to social psychologists. Much of the work in this area, however, has been of the "one-shot" variety, focusing on factors influencing initial attraction between strangers. Social psychologists, for instance, have studied how proximity, similarity, physical attractiveness, and equity influence strangers' initial attraction toward one another. Recently, some investigators have argued that close relationships such as friendships or romantic relationships are so different from casual ones that little of what has been gleaned from the study of initial attraction will be of use in understanding them (e.g., Levinger & Snoek, 1972; Murstein, Cerreto, & MacDonald; Rubin, 1973). Such criticisms, whether or not they turn out to be correct, highlight the importance of social psychologists addressing themselves more fully to understanding the dynamics of close friendships and how people become close. If whatever it is that distinguishes close from not close relationships develops very gradually, perhaps it is true that studying people who have just met will be of little importance to understanding the formation and dynamics of relationships such as friendships and romantic relationships. If, however, people make some fairly clear decisions about the nature of relationships early on, then one can argue that studying initial impressions and behavior *is* important to the study of close relationships. If decisions are made early, initial impressions should influence those decisions. Moreover, important differences in behaviors that distinguish close relationships from other relationships may be observed very early in those relationships, perhaps even in the first hours and perhaps even in a laboratory setting.

In this chapter, we briefly discuss some of the ways in which the nature of *social exchange* that takes place in relationships typically described as "close" or "intimate" may differ from that which takes place in relationships that are not described using such terms. Then we point out that to date little

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work has focused on the question of *when* and *how* these distinctions come about. Is the decision-making a slow, gradual process, making it difficult to pick up differences early in relationships? Several theories of relationships seem to suggest this. Alternatively, do people make a decision quickly, thereby producing large differences, early in the relationship, in the nature of social exchange between relationships likely to become close and those not so destined? Addressing these questions is the topic of major concern in this chapter. Further, we ask questions about what factors have an impact on the decision processes and whether what we have learned from the study of initial attraction can be applied to understanding close relationships.

For purposes of this chapter, *exchange* is defined in very general terms. We consider it to include verbal and other communicative exchanges as well as exchanges of more tangible resources. The term *close relationships* refers to relationships such as friendships or romantic relationships as contrasted with relationships between casual acquaintances, co-workers, or between people who do business with one another.

Some Differences in Exchange Between Close and Casual Relationships

Before discussing how quickly or gradually the nature of social exchange in close relationships is differentiated from social exchange in other relationships, we must ask what distinguishes social exchange in a close relationship from social exchange in one that is not close. Researchers have suggested several possibilities.

First, in a recent book on close relationships, Kelley et al. (1983) defined *closeness* as the degree to which two person's behaviors are interdependent. To the extent that one person's behavior is dependent upon the other's, or, in other words, to the degree that their chains of behaviors are "causally interchained," the relationship is close. To the extent that persons' behaviors are not intertwined, the relationship is not close. Working within this framework Kelley et al. suggested that a relationship may be considered closer when members *frequently* influence one another, when a single behavior on the part of one can produce an *intense reacton* or a *long chain* of responses on the other's part, and when the types of impacts are *diverse.** The idea that closeness is reflected in greater *amounts* of exchange is also reflected in others' writings (e.g., Berg, 1983, 1984; Hays, 1984) and has received some empirical support. For example, the amount of self-disclosure

*We note that Kelley et al.'s distinction between close versus not close relationships does not correspond exactly with the distinction between relationships that is of primary concern in the present chapter. A business relationship, for instance, might be close in terms of how frequently members influence one another, yet most people do not refer to business relationships as close, and for purposes of this chapter, we would not consider most business relationships, as close.

occurring between friends has been shown to be related to the stability and reported closeness of the relationship (Altman & Taylor; Berg; 1983). The idea that a greater *diversity* of resources are exchanged in close versus not close relationships has also been expressed by others (e.g., Berg, 1984; Clark, 1981; Walster, Walster & Berscheid, 1978).

The *quality of resources* exchanged is another basis on which some investigators have distinguished close from not close relationships. For example, Tornblom and Fredholm (1984) took note of Foa and Foa's (1974) categorization of resources into classes of love, services, status, information, money, and goods and suggested that the giving of some of these resources (i.e., love, status, and service) is more characteristic of friendships than is the giving of others. Supporting this idea is their finding that descriptions of exchanges of love and service, although not status exchanges, are more likely to lead observers to conclude that friendship exists between two people than are descriptions of exchanges of information, goods, or money.

Others have pointed out that the quality of *communication* is different in close as compared with other relationships. For instance, self-disclosure researchers have argued that the closer the relationship, the greater the intimacy or depth of self-disclosure (e.g., Altman & Taylor, 1973; Tolstedt & Stokes, 1984). In support of these ideas, researchers examining the self-disclosure of friends (e.g., Altman & Taylor, 1973; Berg, 1984; Hays, 1985) and dating couples (e.g., Berg, 1983) have found that the intimacy of self-disclosure is related to the stability and reported closeness of the relationship. In addition, Preno and Stiles (1983) demonstrated another difference in communication behavior between close versus not close relations. They reported that the communications of married subjects are more presumptive and directive than are the communications of subjects encountering one another for the first time.

Still other work suggests distinguishing close from not close relationships on the basis of the *norms* governing when benefits ought to be given and accepted. For example, several researchers have suggested and provided some evidence that members of relationships such as friendships are more likely to give one another benefits in response to needs and desires (in Miller & Berg's, 1984, terms, *selective resources*) than are people not involved in close relationships (e.g., Clark & Mills, 1979; Clark, Ouellette & Milberg, 1984; Kelley, 1979; Lerner, Miller, & Holmes, 1976; Mills & Clark, 1982), whereas members of business relationships or strangers are more likely to give benefits in response to past benefits, with the expectation of receiving comparable benefits in return (e.g. Clark & Mills, 1979) or simply on the basis of their own anticipated outcomes (Kelley, 1979).

Arguments that the circumstances under which exchanges take place differentiate close relationships from other relationships also come from the self-disclosure literature. Investigators have found that the immediate reciprocity of self-disclosures may be greater between strangers than between established friends (Derlega, Wilson, & Chaikin, 1976; Won-

Doornik, 1979) or spouses (Morton, 1978). An explanation of these findings offered by Miller and Berg (1984), however, suggests some caution in interpreting these results as indicating a general decline in reciprocity per se. Instead, they may reflect differences in *when* people in close versus not close relationships reciprocate. They suggest that strangers, particularly those who wished to develop friendships with the other felt more *urgency* to demonstrate interest in a relationship and to reciprocate. As a friendship becomes established, feelings of urgency may decline. Consequently, immediate reciprocity may decline as well (Miller & Berg, 1984). This explanation, if correct, suggests that a general conclusion that high reciprocity of self-disclosure is more characteristic of strangers than of friends or spouses may be misleading. Instead, high reciprocity of self-disclosure may be more characteristic of people destined to become close than *either* (a) people destined not to become close or (b) those who have already established closeness.

Finally, there are ways of distinguishing close from other relationships that do not deal *directly* with the nature of social exchange but may be of importance to understanding the nature of social exchange in close as compared to relationships that are not close. For instance, close relationships have been distinguished from ones that are not close on the basis of whether the relationship tends to be intrinsically satisfying (Blau, 1964), the expected length of the relationship (Mills & Clark, 1982; Walster et al., 1978), and whether the people involved in the relationship think of themselves as a unit (e.g., Hatfield & Sprecher, 1983; Levinger, 1979; Walster et al. 1978; Wegner & Guiliano, 1982). These variables may be of importance in understanding exchange in relationships for a variety of reasons. For instance, the more intrinsically rewarding participants find a relationship, the less concerned they may feel about specific repayments for benefits given. Expected endurance of a relationship may be important because it makes sense to follow a need-based norm for giving benefits only when a relationship is expected to endure long enough for one's own needs to be met by the other, whereas benefits may be given in response to a past benefit or with the expectation of receiving a benefit in return in a relationship of either a short or a long duration (Mills & Clark, 1982). Alternatively, duration may be important because it allows one to work out complicated exchanges involving the giving and receiving of a variety of benefits over a long time span (Walster et al., 1978). Finally, perception of oneself and the other as a "unit" may be important because if members of a relationship think of themselves as a unit, they may not feel as if they are giving anything *away* when they give something to the other person.

To summarize, various authors have claimed that social exchange in close relationships differs from social exchange in other relationships in terms of the interdependence of people's behavior, the amount and variety of resources exchanged, the quality of resources exchanged, the circumstances under which benefits are given, as well as in terms of such things as whether the people involved see themselves as a unit, whether the relationship tends

to be intrinsically rewarding and the length of the relationship. The nature of social exchange in close as compared with not as close relationships may differ in other ways as well. Nonetheless, this brief discussion should provide readers with an idea of the types of changes in the nature of exchange between not as close and close relationships.

These differences raise another question that, as we pointed out previously, has received almost no attention to date: Given that differences such as these exist, when do they arise?

When Are Differences in Exchange Detectable?

Is the transition in the nature of social exchange between casual acquaintances and close friends gradual? Or does it occur early in the relationship's development? To consider still another possibility, might a decision about closeness be made upon first meeting, such that, at least for some aspects of exchange, there really is no transition period? Below we briefly review theory and research relevant to each view. Our own view, as will become evident, is that decisions about what relationship type people wish to pursue are often made very early in a relationship, often right at the beginning. As a result, many differences in the nature of social exchange between casual acquaintances and close friends will occur right at the beginning of the relationship. We do not push this view too far, however. Some differences in social exchange, we suggest, do emerge gradually. Before expressing our own views though, consider the positions on this issue that some other relationship researchers have explicitly or implicitly taken.

The Transition Is a Continuous and Gradual Process

The suggestion that the transition from a casual to a close relationship such as a friendship or romantic relationship is gradual is exemplified in the theoretical writings of Levinger and Snoek (1972) and Altman and Taylor (1973) as well as in some "filter" theories of relationship formation (e.g., Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962; Murstein, 1970). In brief, Levinger and Snoek hold that friendship development proceeds from a stage of unilateral awareness (in which only one person is aware of the other) through a stage of surface contact (in which there is interacton, but it is formal and/or governed by social roles and norms), to a stage of mutuality. In this last stage, the life space of the parties begins to overlap. Interaction becomes less formal and the parties develop their own particular interaction rules and a large number of shared experiences. Two processes are supposedly critical to this development. One is the process of interpersonal discovery and disclosure. The other is a process of mutual investment wherein each person increasingly coordinates behavior with the other and cares emotionally about the other. In the process the people become increasingly inter-

dependent: "their interdependence expands not only with the increased frequency and diversity of interchain connections, but also with increases in the affective strength of those connections" (Levinger, 1983, p. 325). There would appear to be no substitute for the passage of time and repeated interactions in this process, although Levinger did point out that the rate of "progress" is not always constant.

Social penetration theory (Altman & Taylor, 1973) also suggests that the development of close friendship is a gradual process. According to this theory, after an interaction occurs, a person evaluates his or her outcomes in light of preinteraction expectations and available interaction alternatives. Then the person forecasts the likely outcome of future interactions. Both the evaluations and the projected forecasts are stored in memory for later use. If they are favorable, future interaction is initiated and is again evaluated in terms of how it agrees with the previous forecast. Then revised predictions are made. If these new forecasts are favorable, the person is likely to decide to begin interacting at a slightly more intimate level. If the forecast is uncertain, the decision is likely to be to slow down the course of penetration or to hold it at the current intimacy level. Finally, if the forecast is clearly for stormy seas, the decision is likely to be to terminate the relationship. In other words, the model proposes that friendship development is a continuous process of evaluation and reforecasting. Because the outcome of any given interaction can be evaluated in terms of a past history of positive or negative encounters, with time the importance of any single event diminishes. For Altman and Taylor, the most stable and closest relationships are predicted to be those that have developed slowly over a large number of interactions.

Altman, Vinsel, and Brown (1981) noted that the studies done to test the theory (e.g., Altman & Haythorn, 1965; Keiser & Altman, 1976; Morton, 1978; Taylor, 1968; Taylor & Altman, 1975; Taylor, Altman, & Sorrentino, 1969) "have consistently demonstrated that the growth of relationships follows the hypothesized course of development from peripheral, superficial aspects of personality to more intimate ones. The disclosure of superficial information usually takes place rapidly during the early states of a relationship, whereas exposure of intimate aspects of the self occurs only *gradually* [italics added] and at later states of a relationship" (p. 110). Recent research also supports this view (Hays, 1985). Although Altman et al. (1981) recently added that "relationships can exhibit cyclical, reversible and nonlinear processes" (p. 109) as well as the unidirectional, cumulative processes implied earlier, their hypothesized course of close relationship development may still be described as gradual (see pp. 142–145 of Altman et al., 1981).

Finally, filter theories in their various forms (e.g., Kerckhoff & Davis, 1962; Murstein, 1970) also seem to postulate gradual relationship formation. These theories, developed primarily in the context of mate selection, hold that potential partners pass through a successive series of "filters." Initially,

external characteristics (such as similarity in physical attractiveness) will be of primary importance. Later issues of value consensus come to the fore, and, finally, if a person has survived these earlier filterings, the issue of how his or her role fits with one's own becomes the primary determinant of attraction. The empirical evidence for filter theories is rather weak, however (e.g., Levinger, Senn, & Jorgensen, 1970; Rubin & Levinger, 1974).

In addition to theories that suggest gradual development of friendships and romantic relationships, some empirical work done outside the context of these theories would also seem to suggest that development of "closeness" is a gradual process. In studies by Bolton (1961) and Braiker and Kelley (1979), respondents' retrospective reports of the development of their relationships were gathered. Despite reports of some "turning points," relationship development was recalled as having been gradual. Braiker and Kelley (1979), for instance, identified four content dimensions that couples used to describe their courtship: (a) love, or the extent of belongingness or attachment; (b) conflict, or the degree of negative affect and overt argument; (c) maintenance, or the degree of self-disclosure between partners about the relationship; and (d) ambivalence, or the extent of confusion or hesitancy about continuing the relationship. Then a questionnaire based on these dimensions was given to young married couples who completed it once for each of four stages of their relationship's development: casual dating, serious dating, engagement, and the first 6 months of marriage. Scores for three of the four dimensions changed fairly gradually over each of the four time periods. Specifically, love and maintenance increased over all four stages, whereas ambivalence decreased over the four stages. Conflict was the only dimension not showing continuous, gradual changes over all stages. It increased from casual to serious dating and then leveled off.

Decisions About the Nature of Relationships and Corresponding Differentiation Occur Quickly

In contrast to the theories and empirical evidence just described, some recent work suggests that decisions about the nature of relationships, close versus not close, *and* corresponding differences in at least some types of exchange behaviors may be reached quite early. Before reviewing this work however, consider the *types* of evidence that would indicate decisions about the desired closeness of relationships and, consequently, differentiation in social exchange occur quite early. One type of evidence, indicating that decisions about the nature of social exchange are made early, comes from studies showing that measures of attraction and of social exchange variables obtained early in the course of a relationship predict the state of the relationship at a later time almost as well or as well as the same measures taken much later. This is consistent with the idea that people are making decisions about whether a relationship will be close early and are sticking by these decisions. It does not fit as well with the view that persons gradually

and continuously explore the pros and cons of a relationship, slowly becoming attracted and committed to each other (or gradually choosing to drop out of the relationship). If that were the case, measures taken early should be considerably poorer predictors of the relationship's eventual outcome than are measures taken later. Of course, although such findings are more consistent with the idea that decisions are made early than with the idea that there is constant reevaluation and new decisions, it does not necessarily mean a *conscious* decision has been made early. A relationship may be initially set on a particular course; actually calling the relationship a friendship or romantic relationship may come later. Furthermore, this type of evidence does not demonstrate that differentiation in the nature of actual social exchange comes early.

What type of evidence is needed to show more clearly that not only may implicit decisions about the desired nature of a relationship be made early but also that clear differentiation in the nature of social exchange occurs soon afterwards? In answering this question we note first why the theories and empirical data cited previously supporting the gradual view were *not* optimal for detecting possible early decision-making and differentiation. First, in order to detect very early changes, we must examine *initial* interactions between people. Many of the studies supporting the "gradual" view of relationship development have focused on what happens in close relationships *after* the very initial states of those relationships have passed. For instance, Braiker and Kelley (1979) started their investigation by asking participants about a point in their relationship at which they were already dating. By excluding first meetings, researchers may miss important differentiation in the nature of social exchange occurring *very* early in relationships. Second, and more important, in order to detect early differentiation between close and not close relationships, we must make *comparisons* between the nature of social exchange in relationships likely and those unlikely to become friendships or romantic relationships early in the formation of each type of relationship. If decisions are made early, perhaps even immediately upon first meeting, such direct comparisons are crucial to demonstrate this differentiation. One cannot simply examine differentiation in close relationships over time, assuming that they started out in the initial few meetings exhibiting the same type and amount of social exchange that would occur in relationships not destined to become close.

The theories just reviewed have simply not addressed the issue of whether close relationships may be differentiated from ones that will not become close from the very beginning. Moreover, many of the empirical studies suggesting that close relationships are slowly differentiated from other relationships (e.g., Bolton, 1961; Braiker & Kelley, 1979) have not examined behavior in relationships unlikely to become close. Thus, data from these studies could not be used to make the comparisons central to our present concern.

Recent studies exist, however, that do examine relationships early in their formation and do compare relationships destined to become close with those not so destined. Although none of these studies were designed specifically to address the issues we raise in the chapter, their results clearly support the idea that decisions about whether or not a friendship will be close and that at least some aspects of social exchange that distinguish close from other relationships are differentiated at or near the beginning of relationships. Some studies show differences in the quantity and quality of exchange in relationships destined to become close as opposed to other relationships as early as 2 weeks into those relationships. Other studies show that simple experimental manipulations are capable of *immediately* producing expressions of desire for different types of relationships (i.e., acquaintanceship versus friendship) as well as striking differences in certain aspects of social exchange. In other words, these studies suggest that people know certain "rules" governing behavior in close versus other relationships and can *very* quickly follow the appropriate rules for the relationship type they desire. In addition, some evidence exists showing that these immediate differences in the social exchange norms parallel differences that exist between casual relationships and established close relationships.

We now review this recent evidence, beginning with studies that suggest the course of relationships is "established" fairly early. Then we turn to the evidence that at least implicit decisions about the desired nature of a relationship are made quickly and that clear differentiation in some aspects of social exchange may immediately follow the decision.

Predicting relationship outcome from measures taken early versus late. In two studies, one investigating dating couples (Berg, 1983) and the other investigating college roommates (Berg, 1984), predictions of the final outcomes of relationships were found to be just about as accurate or as accurate using measures obtained near the beginning of the relationship as they were using measures obtained approximately 4 months later. Studying dating couples, Berg employed measures of love, degree of conflict, feelings of ambiguity about the relationship, communication about the relationship, and the extent to which members changed their behavior to resolve problems (Braiker & Kelley, 1979). These measures were administered to dating couples early in their relationships (after about five dates) and again about 4 months later. Using the early measures as predictors in a discriminant analysis allowed 80% of the subjects to be correctly classified as either still dating or not. Although this rose by 10% when later measures were used as discriminating variables, it is clear that prediction of later dating status could be made quite accurately at an early time. Also, at *both* times of measurement subjects who continued to date compared to those who broke up felt that the relationship exceeded both their expectations (comparison level) and their comparison level for alternatives.

To the extent that college roommates decide to continue to live together because they have formed friendships, a second study by Berg (1984) provides additional evidence for decisions about the nature of relationships being made early. In this study initial measure of students' liking for their roommate, satisfaction with their living arrangements, self-disclosure, equity, benefits received and desires met were obtained 2 weeks after the beginning of classes and again in the spring. Discriminant analysis was once again used, with the criterion being decisions about living together the next year (yes, no, undecided). This time, measures taken *later* in the year were no better as predictors than were measures taken much earlier (58% versus 59% correctly classified, respectively).

The evidence from these two studies is consistent with the idea that people are making decisions about the nature of their relationships early. It does not fit as well with the view that members of relationships are gradually exploring the pros and cons of relationships and that decisions about whether to stay in or to leave the relationship occur only gradually.

Evidence of differentiation early in relationships. Although accurate predictions of relationship outcome from early measures provides evidence consistent with people making decisions about the nature of their relationships early and against the idea of *gradual* differentiation other evidence is needed to demonstrate that the nature of social exchange is clearly differentiated, early in such relationships. Additional data from recent longitudinal studies provide such evidence. Other analyses from the Berg (1983) study, for instance, revealed that at both early and later points in time, subjects who continued to date differed from those who broke up not only in love for their partner and satisfaction with their relationship, but also on a number of social exchange dimensions as well. At *both* times continuing daters reported that they engaged in more communication about the relationship, altered their behavior more to resolve problems, received more self-disclosure from their partner, and felt that their relationship was superior to their expectations for it and to other alternatives.

In addition, Hays (1984, 1985) recently conducted two longitudinal studies of friendship formation. His results suggest that relationships destined to become close not only can be accurately predicted quite early but also that at least some aspects of the nature of social exchange in those two types of relationships are differentiated very early. In each study at a point just 2 to 3 weeks into the fall term, Hays asked new students to select two same sex others whom they had not known prior to the school year but whom they thought might become good friends as the year progressed. At this time and again about every 3 weeks throughout the fall (for a total of four measurements), subjects indicated the amount of casual and intimate dyadic exchanges (communication, companionship, affection, and consideration) that they had with each of these others. Relationships that at the end of the semester were rated as close friendships were compared with those that were not rated as close.

In these studies, the overall amount of behavioral exchange increased over time among pairs rated as close at the end of the semester but not among those rated as not-close at the end of the semester. Two findings not emphasized, however, are of importance for the point we wish to make here. First, inspection of Hays' plots of exchange behavior across time indicates that in both studies pairs that developed into close friends showed more behavioral exchange in many intimate and nonintimate areas *from the time exchange was first assessed.* They then increased very gradually to 6 weeks and were as high at 6 weeks as they were at 12 weeks. To reiterate, though, *much* and in some cases *most* of the differentiation was already present at 2 weeks. As Hays (1984) noted, "The emergence of intimate behavioral exchange was not as gradual as expected" (p. 91). This is consistent with the idea that decisions about whether a relationship will be close are made, either implicitly or explicitly, at an early point in relationship development and that the nature of at least some aspects of social exchange are clearly differentiated early on.

Although Berg's and Hays' studies show early differentiation of social exchange processes in relationships destined to become close verus those not so destined, their work may not have been able to reveal just how early such differentiation takes place. After all, the reports of behavior in their studies were not collected upon participants' first meeting but rather following several dates (Berg, 1983) or after the passage of 2 to 3 weeks (Hays, 1984, 1985). Moreover, the magnitude of the differentiation indicated by these studies undoubtedly has been underestimated because in all cases the "target" people who were studied, *including the non*close targets, would seem to be, a priori, considerably more likely than average to become the subjects' friends or romantic partners. After all, they were either already dating the subject (Berg, 1983), had been chosen by the subject as someone who might become a friend (Hays, 1984, 1985), or they and the subject had been assigned to be roommates (Berg, 1984), a situation that probably leads to a heightened expectaton of at least liking one another (Darley & Berscheid, 1967) and probably also of becoming friends.

Fortunately, additional evidence exists indicating that people make decisions about relationships early that result in immediate differences in social exchange processes that avoids these issues. This evidence, which comes mainly from recent laboratory work on "communal" and "exchange" relationships (Clark & Mills, 1979), compares differences in the nature of social exchange in relationships that subjects view as likely to become friendships (or possibly romantic relationships) with those that they view as likely to remain casual acquaintances in the first *hour* of those relationships.

Clark and Mills distinguished communal from exchange relationships on the basis of norms governing the giving and receiving of benefits (Clark & Mills, 1979; Mills & Clark, 1982). In communal relationships people are presumably concerned with one another's needs and benefit one another in response to needs or to demonstrate general concern for the other.

Friendships and romantic relationships often exemplify communal relationships. In contrast, in exchange relationships people presumably feel no special responsibility for the other and benefit one another in response to past benefits or with the expectation of receiving comparable benefits in return. Acquaintanceships and business relationships often exemplify exchange relationships.

In most of the studies done investigating this distinction, subjects were recruited to participate along with a friendly, attractive confederate sometimes of the same gender, sometimes of the opposite gender. Then the type of relationship subjects desired with this confederate was manipulated. To produce desire for a communal relationship, investigators led subjects to believe that the confederate was new at the university and anxious to meet people. To produce desire for an exchange relationship, investigators led other subjects to believe that this same confederate was married, had been at the university for a while, and presumably was not anxious to make new friends. As a result of these manipulations, the researchers expected that subjects would immediately choose to follow exchange or communal norms to guide their behavior toward the other and to evaluate the others' behavior toward them. In other words, in originally planning this work, the investigators simply assumed that decisions about the type of relationship one wants with another occur very early. This technique has proven successful. The communal and exchange manipulations have been shown to cause subjects *immediately* to express preferences for distinct types of relationships, express preferences for following distinct social exchange norms, and behave in ways consistent with those distinct social norms.

First consider evidence that manipulations of a desire for a communal versus an exchange relationship produce immediate differences in the type of relationships subjects say that they prefer with the other. Clark (in press) recruited subjects for a study on impression formation during which they expected to have a discussion with an opposite-sex stranger. Before meeting the "other," however, the subject had a chance to look at a picture of the other and a questionnaire the other had supposedly filled out. The questionnaire indicated either that the other was single, new at the university, and anxious to meet people or that the other was married, had been at the university for 2 years, and would be picked up after the study by a spouse. After looking over these materials, the subject checked one of five categories of relationships he or she would like to have with the other: (a) a romantic relationship, (b) a friendship, (c) an acquaintanceship, (d) a business-like relationship, or (e) no relationship at all. The "communal" manipulation led a significantly higher proportion of subjects to indicate that they wanted a friendship than did the "exchange" manipulation, which instead led people to choose the acquaintanceship option. The remaining options, with the exception of the "business-like" option that was chosen only once (in the "exchange" condition), were not chosen at all. Here, then, is a case in which people were deciding on the type of relationship they wanted with the other before even having met the other.

Of course, finding that people choose to pursue or not to pursue a friendship or an acquaintanceship very early does not necessarily mean that the nature of social exchange will differ right from the beginning in friendships versus acquaintanceships. However, other results emerging from the same program of research demonstrate that the same manipulations also cause people to say immediately that they want to follow distinct social exchange norms and, more importantly, to *behave* in ways indicating that they actually are following these distinct norms within the first hour of the relationship.

In the Clark (in press) study, for instance, subjects exposed to the communal manipulation were not only more likely than subjects exposed to the exchange manipulation to say that they desired a friendship, but also significantly more likely to agree with statements that they would respond to the others' needs and expect the other to respond to their needs relative to agreeing with statements that they would expect repayment for favors and would readily repay the other for favors. The opposite pattern of results held for the exchange subjects. Clark and Vanderlipp (in press) report similar findings with same sex pairs of subjects.

Even more convincing evidence comes from studies examining the nature of subjects' actual behavior immediately following exposure to these manipulations. For instance, in a study on helping (Clark et al., 1984), subjects led to expect a communal relationship immediately helped the other significantly more than did subjects led to expect an exchange relationship. Moreover, in the same study, subjects led to expect communal relationships responded to a cue that the other was sad by significantly increasing helping, whereas the other's sadness had *no* impact on helping when exchange relationships were expected. In addition, Clark and Mills (1979, Study 1) found that when people were induced to help another, those led to expect an exchange relationship with the other liked the other more if she repayed them than if she did not, whereas the opposite pattern occurred when subjects were led to expect a communal relationship with the other. In still another study, subjects received aid from another (Clark & Mills, 1979, Study 2). Subjects who were exposed to the exchange manipulation liked the other more when she requested repayment than when she did not, whereas subjects exposed to the communal manipulation liked the other less when she requested repayment than when she did not. Finally, in a study on keeping tract of inputs into a joint task, people led to expect an exchange relationship with another were shown to keep track of their inputs, whereas subjects led to expect a communal relationship did not (Clark, 1984, Study 1).

These studies employing communal and exchange relationship manipulations clearly indicate that not only can people make decisions about what type of relationship they want with another quickly, but also that the norms they will follow in giving and receiving benefits in these relationships are chosen *very* quickly. Indeed, in the case of these studies, the nature of social exchange was differentiated within the first hour!

Moreover, studies employing these particular manipulations are not the only ones demonstrating that the nature of social exchange in relationships likely to become close can be quickly distinguished from that in other relationships. Studies by Sholar and Clark (1982) and by Berg, Blaylock, Camarillo, and Steck (1985) illustrate the same point. In the Sholar and Clark study, subjects were recruited for a research session on group problem-solving. When they arrived, they were told that they had been matched to four-person groups based on extensive pretests given at the beginning of the semester. The matching supposedly had been done either in such a way that group members were very likely to become friends or in such a way that group members were unlikely to be friends. Group members expecting friendship formation were found to state *immediately* that a group decision rule (i.e., consensus) that would take everyone's needs into account was more appropriate than one that would not (i.e., majority rule). In contrast, subjects led to expect no particular type of relationship with their group members showed no such preference.

Recently, Berg et al. (1985) found that people act in ways that are consistent with such preferences. In this study, previously unacquainted subjects participated in a decomposed gaming procedure that provided varying amounts of rewards for themselves and their partner. Prior to beginning subjects had or did not have a short "get acquainted session" and were led to anticipate or not anticipate future interaction with their partner. The effect of these differences in prior and anticipated interaction on the motives represented by subject's choices in the game was examined. Results indicated that subjects (particularly males) who had experienced prior interaction or who anticipated future interaction made fewer choices in the game exemplifying either the desire to "beat" the other or to maximize their own outcome exclusively. They made more choices that reflected the goals of maximizing the other's outcome, maximizing the total outcomes of self and other as a unit, and ensuring equal distribution of rewards between self and other. To the extent that past interaction and the anticipation of future interaction increase the anticipation of a close relationship, as one might expect based on findings such as those reported by Darley and Berscheid (1967), these results demonstrate immediate differences in exchange behavior that parallel the difference in rule preference found by Sholar and Clark (1982).

Of course, the early differentiation observed in these studies may not generalize to differences in behaviors in ongoing friendships as compared with relationships that would not be described as close. A recent series of studies, however, provides some evidence for such generalizability. In a series of studies dealing with keeping track of inputs into joint tasks, Clark (1984) not only manipulated the type of relationship expected with the other, but also compared the same behavior under the same circumstances between pairs of *existing friends* and pairs of strangers not exposed to any relationship manipulation. She found that the immediate changes in

behavior produced by manipulation of desire for a communal relationship as compared with an exchange relationship were paralleled by differences in the behavior of close friends as compared with strangers. Specifically, both subjects led to desire an exchange relationship and strangers exposed to no relationship manipulation carefully kept tract of their individual inputs into a joint task. In contrast, neither subjects led to desire a communal relationship nor subjects who worked with an actual friend showed any effort to keep track of individual inputs into joint tasks. Indeed, each showed some tendency to *avoid* doing so.

Differentiation may actually be exaggerated early in the development of close relationships. We have argued that the nature of social exchange may be differentiated very early in relationships destined to become close relative to that in relationships not so destined. Going one step further, we now suggest that such differentiation may even be exaggerated early in the development of close relationships relative to the differentiation that will continue to exist later. This may occur because behaving in ways appropriate to a friendship or romantic relationship *and* actively avoiding behavior more appropriate to acquaintanceships or business-like relationships may serve a signalling, in other words, a communication function. Specifically, it may serve to let the other know what type of relationship is desired. Thus, early in relationships people may intentionally and effortfully avoid any hint that inappropriate norms are being followed. Once the relationship is established, this communication function is no longer important. People may stop "bending over backwards" to avoid any hint of following inappropriate norms, and they may also be somewhat more relaxed about following the correct norms as well.

To date, only a small amount of data exists supporting this point. The clearest evidence comes from the previously discussed series of studies by Clark (1984) on record keeping during joint tasks for which there will be a reward. To make the present point, we must describe these studies in more detail. In the first study of this series, subjects were led to expect either a communal or an exchange relationship. They were then assigned to work on a joint task with the other. The task involved locating numbers in a matrix and circling them. The other took a turn first and circled numbers either in red or black ink. Then the matrix was placed on the subject's desk, on which both a red and a black pen had already been placed. The subject's behavior was observed. Clark reasoned that if more than 50% of the subjects in either condition picked a different color pen from that used by the confederate, that would be evidence of intentional record keeping. If fewer than 50% did so that would be evidence of actively avoiding record keeping. The results revealed that significantly more than 50% of the exchange subjects did choose a different color pen. More importantly, for purposes of the present point, significantly fewer than 50% of the communal subjects did so. It is noteworthy that communal norms do not actually call for such avoidance,

but nonetheless communal subjects did "bend over backwards" to avoid following exchange norms.

The evidence that differentiation may decrease once friendships are firmly established comes from the second two studies in the same series. The initial study was replicated twice with pairs of established friends and pairs of strangers. In both cases strangers were once again significantly more likely than chance and than actual friends to choose different color pens, but in neither study did actual friends' choice of pens differ from chance. Presumably, actual friends no longer feel a need to go out of their way to avoid exchange norms in order to communicate what type of relationship they desire.

Aspects of the previously mentioned study by Hays (1985) are also consistent with the idea that very early in relationships that people want to become close, they may be quite concerned with demonstrating their interest to the other and that this concern may decline over time. Specifically, Hays noted that "successfully progressing dyads displayed an initial flurry of interaction at the onset of their relationships followed by a general decline" (p. 919). He called this early phase the "relationship building phase" and suggested that the drop off in exchange behavior that followed might be due to subjects having less free time as the school year progressed. However, he noted, despite the decrease in behavior, the close dyads' attitudinal ratings of friendship consistently *increased* over time. Although recognizing the reasonableness of Hays' points, we suggest that perhaps early in the relationship dyads are very concerned about demonstrating their availability and interest in the relationship and their responsiveness (Miller & Berg, 1984) to the other. Thus, they may have intensely pursued interactions early on. Then, once they felt confident that the relationship was established, the perceived need for the flurry of activity and, consequently, the activity itself dropped off.

We have now reviewed evidence suggesting that people may reach decisions about pursuing close friendships very early and that differentiation in the nature of social exchange may occur very quickly thereafter. Indeed, differentiation may be exaggerated early in relationships relative to later. This raises two new questions. First, *why* should people reach such decisions early as opposed to "taking their time"? Second, what factors influence this decision?

Why a Decision May Be Reached Early

Close social relationships are what people most often cite as giving their lives meaning (Klinger, 1977). These relationships have the potential of yielding great rewards, but also of being the source of great costs as well. Given their importance, and the fact that one can only maintain a limited number of close friendships and usually just one romantic relationship,

people might be expected to take a "slow and easy does it" approach. However, we have just noted that certain aspects of behavior in close relationships are likely to differ from that in relationships that are not close very early. *Why* should differentiation take place early as opposed to more gradually? Our analysis suggests that one reason is simply that some of the rules governing close versus not close relationships differ in *fundamental* ways. To the extent that friendships or romantic relationships involve some qualitatively different types of social exchange rather than simply more (or less) of what is involved in other relationships, it should be quite difficult to build a close relationship gradually. One must choose to follow the rules for a close relationship early in order to communicate one's desire for such a relationship to the other and, consequently, to give it a chance to develop further. Otherwise, the other cannot tell what sort of relationship is desired and respond in kind if he or she so desires.

Stating the same idea in a different way, one might say that quite different "scripts" (Abelson, 1976) exist for close versus other relationships. Such scripts may encompass the differences between close and other relationships noted previously and others as well. Should such a script be evoked by some aspect of an interaction, it may well be evoked in full and affect the way subsequent information about the other and the relationship is perceived, stored, and recalled. It may also guide one's actions. Recent research by Davis and Todd (1982, in press) demonstrating that shared "prototypes" of various types of relationships exist (e.g., friendships, acquaintanceships, and romantic relationships) is consistent with this idea. Once a decision is made to pursue a friendship or romantic relationship and to follow the rules appropriate to the relationship, other processes may come into play, helping to ensure that the relationship develops along the expected lines. For instance, people may tend to recall those aspects of the other's behavior consistent with their expectations (Zadny & Gerard, 1974), they may selectively seek out such information (Snyder & Swann, 1978; Swann & Read, 1981) and, as a result, elicit behavior from the other consistent with their expectations (Snyder, Tanke, & Berscheid, 1977).

Some Factors Influencing Decisions About Whether a Relationship Will Be Close

We have, then, both some empirical data suggesting that decisions about close friendships are made early and a rationale for why this may be. Now we mention a few factors that may influence such a decision or evoke a script for close friendships. We have not constructed an exhaustive list, but rather tried to identify a few variables suggested by past researchers and some others that look promising and merit further study.

The assumption that close relationships, such as friendships, can be distinguished on the basis of the norms one follows in a relationship with

another suggests some variables that should be important to the decision to pursue a close relationship. First, both the self and the other must be *available* for a relationship in which each can respond to the other's needs. Beyond this, the *responsiveness* of the other to the person and the closely related idea of the other's degree of *adherence to communal norms* ought to influence this decision. We discuss these variables first, then turn to a brief discussion of some traditional determinants of attraction.

Availability. Both a person's availability for a close relationship and the perception that the other is also available should exert a strong influence on the decision to pursue close friendship. In our view, judgments of availability include assessments of the (a) accessibility of the other, (b) the amount/degree of both the person's and the other's prior commitments and (c) both the person's and the other's alternatives.

Accessibility refers to the likelihood that both parties will be able to interact with one another on the frequent basis and in the particular ways that close friendships often require. Certainly, physical proximity should increase accessibility, and studies investigating the effects of physical proximity on relationships (e.g., Festinger, Schachter, & Back, 1950; Hays, 1985; Segal, 1974) very clearly demonstrate the importance of this variable to the development of friendships.

Accessibility also involves judgments of whether both parties have the resources necessary for the type of exchange needed to form a close relationship. "Do I have the resources necessary to fulfill the other's needs?" and "does the other have the resources necessary to fulfill my needs?" should be important questions people ask themselves. It may also be that judgments of consensus (i.e., "Do we both know what rules we will follow in our exchanges, and do we agree on what each of us needs from our relationship with the other?") play a role here. In short, judgments about accessibility will involve accessing the extent to which it will be *possible* for a particular friendship to become close.

Judgments of availability also involve assessments of both one's own and the other's prior commitments and alternatives. Even if another is physically close, each person has the resources necessary to form a close relationship, and there is consensus, if one already has many close friendships or if the other is so involved, one or both parties may not have the necessary time and/or desire for an additional close friendship. Also, in our culture, some relationships explicitly (as well as implicitly) are exclusive. Often such exclusive relationships will be cross-sex relationships. The most obvious examples are marriage, engagement, or "going steady." Just as the existence of other relationships decreases the chances of the other being perceived as available for a relationship, so too might heavy involvement with a job lead to judgments that oneself and/or the other is unavailable and might preclude a decision to pursue a close relationship.

The Clark (in press) study described previously in which exposure to "communal" and "exchange" relationship manipulations produced immediate differences in desire for a communal as opposed to an exchange relationship fits well with some of these ideas. The major difference between the communal and the exchange manipulation used in that study was the availability of the attractive confederate. The communal manipulaton led the subject to believe that the confederate had no spouse and probably had few friends (having just moved to campus). It also explicitly conveyed that the other was anxious to meet new people; in other words, the other was available. The exchange manipulation, on the other hand, led the subject to believe that the other had a spouse and probably had friends (having been on the campus for 2 years). Further, it contained no information suggesting that the other wanted to meet new people; in other words, the other was relatively *un*available.

Responsiveness. Given a judgment that the other is available, one must determine the other's interest in the relationship. The other's general responsiveness may be extremely important in making such judgments. Alternatively, one may not have given a thought to the other's availability or to one's desire for a close relationship with the other but rather begin to receive signals from the other in the form of the other's responsiveness.

Responsiveness is a dyadic construct referring to the extent to which a person's intentional actions address the needs, desires, and past actions of another (Miller & Berg, 1984) *and* are perceived by the recipient as doing so. Miller and Berg identify two classes of responsiveness: (a) conversational responsiveness (acts through which a person indicates interest in and understanding of another's communications) and (b) relational responsiveness (behaviors involving the attainment or distribution of resources through which a person indicates concern with another's outcomes or needs). Three aspects of action influence judgments of either type of responsiveness: (a) content (what was done), (b) style (how it was done), and (c) timing (when it was done). In any case, the more responsive the other, the greater the judgment that the other is interested in a relationship. As Davis argued, responsiveness may lead to increased attraction, maintenance of interaction, and perception that the responsive person and person responded to have a relationship (Davis, 1982; Davis & Perkowitz, 1979).

The influence of responsiveness on development of friendship is suggested by a recent study (Miller, Berg, & Rugs, 1984) in which subjects read about an interaction between two people and judged the likelihood of friendship developing. They found that after one person was aided by another, the most responsive thing the person could do was either provide a benefit that met a specific need of the initial giver (when such a need was know) or equally divide the reward that the initial aid had allowed the person to earn (when no specific need was known). Although the specific

content of an act might vary, whatever act was seen as most responsive was also viewed as most likely to result in friendship. Thus, when a recipient of aid knew about another's need, friendship was seen as more likely when he or she gave the other a resource that met the need than when he or she offered no repayment, offered one exactly equal to the initial aid, or divided rewards equally. When no specific need was known, friendship was seen as more likely when rewards were equally divided than in other cases.

Other researchers have investigated the effects of variations in the content, style, and timing of *conversational responsiveness* on attraction and the perception that a close friendship will develop. Consistently, investigators have found that as the content of a reply to another's communication becomes more responsive either because it explicitly expresses concern for the other or addresses the same subject matter as the subject's initial communication, attraction for that respondent increases. Subjects' perceptions that a relationship exists or will form also increase (Berg & Archer, 1980, 1983; Davis & Perkowitz, 1979). In addition, Berg and Archer (1982) found that when subjects were given the interaction goal of maximizing their attractiveness to another, their replies to the communications they received became maximally responsive.

As far as stylistic differences in responsiveness go, Dabbs, Uwanna, Evans, and Bakeman (1982) found that attraction at the conclusion of a series of conversations was significantly related to a pairs' use of back-channel communications in their initial interactions. This type of responsiveness may also be related to relationship initiation, and some people may be better at it than others (Miller, Berg, & Archer, 1983; Purvis, Dabbs, & Hopper, 1984). Finally, the timing of responses may also prove to be quite important (Berg & Miller, 1985). Responding to a person's disclosure with concern increases observers' judgment that a friendship exists, but if the initial disclosure is of low intimacy, quick expressions of concern may cause perceptions of friendship to decrease.

The other's adherence to communal norms and his or her transformations. Although responsiveness may generally promote relationship initiation, not all types of responsiveness may be related to the formation of friendships or romantic relationships. One could be quite responsive to another's business offer, for instance, yet that might contribute nothing toward initiating a close relationship in the sense in which we are using that term in the present chapter.

Kelley (1979) postulated that the most effective, if not the only, means of knowing that another considers us a close friend is through the transformations he or she makes to take our needs as well as his or her own needs into account. Similarly, the communal/exchange distinction suggests that being responsive to another's needs and desires ought to be a good way to initiate a relationship such as a friendship or a romantic relationship,

assuming that the other is available and desires such a relationship. Beyond this, the communal/exchange distinction suggests that seeking the other's help or advice (Clark, 1983) and intentionally avoiding following exchange norms (e.g., saying "Don't bother to pay me back") ought to be effective ways of initiating friendships or romantic relationships, again assuming that the target of these tactics is available and desires such a relationship.

Other traditional antecedents of attraction. We can return now to an issue raised at the beginning of the chapter. Is it really the case that little of what has been gleaned from the study of initial attraction will be of use in understanding close relationships? Will laboratory studies of attraction and relationships generally prove to be not very useful? The arguments in this chapter imply that we should not be too pessimistic about the answer. To the extent that decisions about the nature of relationships are made very early, knowing how factors such as physical attractiveness and similarity influence initial attraction may indeed be crucial to understanding relationship formation. Moreover, to the extent that we can influence decisions about relationships in a laboratory and that the nature of social exchange is immediately differentiated following such a decision, laboratory studies investigating differences between relationships destined to become close and those not so destined may also be quite useful. In connection with this point, it is certainly encouraging that, as we discussed earlier, measures taken early in relationships predict later relationship status quite well (Berg, 1983, 1984; Rusbult, 1983). It is also worth noting that some variables shown to influence initial attraction in the laboratory, for instance, similarity (Griffitt, 1970) and matching in physical attractiveness (e.g., Berscheid, Dion, Walster, & Walster, 1971) seem also to predict what relationships will become firmly established later on (Newcomb, 1961).

A Compromise View

We have argued that the transition in the nature of relationships from stranger to friend or from acquaintance to romantic partner may not be as gradual as some earlier theories of relationship formation might imply. We have also argued that laboratory studies of the very beginning of relationships may be quite useful. Now we wish to soften that position a bit. The possibility of early differentiation in relationships has been emphasized primarily because that view has not been prominent in the literature to date. The "gradual" view has been better represented. In reality, of course, we do not advocate adopting *either* the view that all differences in social exchanges of close and not close friends result from gradual, continuous changes in the nature of exchange over time *or* the view that all such differences are present immediately. The truth undoubtedly lies between these two extremes.

Recall the possible differences in social exchange between close and other relationships that were briefly discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Various authors have postulated that close relationships involve greater amounts of exchange, and/or greater interdependence between people. Investigators have also suggested that close relationships involve a greater diversity of exchange, that the intensity of the impact of one person on the other may be greater, that the quality of resources exchanged might be different, and that the norms governing the giving and receiving of benefits might differ. Finally, researchers have suggested that close relationships might be more intrinsically satisfying and expected to last longer and that members may begin to think of themselves as "we" instead of as two separate individuals.

Some changes are gradual. It seems to us that clear differentiation between relationships in terms of some of these aspects may take considerable time to occur and may occur fairly gradually over that time. For example, it appears obvious that the interdependence of two persons' daily behavior—the crucial defining feature of close relationships according to Kelley et al. (1983)—would take time to develop. Also, getting to know and to understand another person through the pool of shared experiences and disclosures that play a central role in Altman and Taylor's (1973) and Levinger and Snoek's (1972) theories, presumably takes time. Furthermore, only with such knowledge may people become skilled at judging and responding to other's needs (Berg, 1984). To give another example, it may take considerable time before people feel free to disclose information about themselves to the other that might embarrass them or that they dare to be presumptive (Preno & Stiles, 1983). More work is needed to establish whether clear differentiation along these dimensions really does occur only gradually and just how long it takes to appear.

In addition to acknowledging that certain types of differentiation may occur only gradually, it is important to point out that our arguments regarding quick differentiation between close and other relationships do not preclude such differentiation *continuing* to occur at a gradual pace over time. Hays' (1984, 1985) findings discussed earlier not only indicate clear differentiation between relationships destined to be close and those not so destined at the time of first measurement, but also continuing differentiation in many areas of behavioral exchange up to 6 weeks, after which time differentiation seemed to level off. Hays (1985) also revealed continuing differentiation in feelings of friendship intensity and benefits received up to 12 weeks, after which time the study ended. In addition, Braiker and Kelley (1979) also discussed earlier support of the idea that love and maintenance behaviors gradually increase over the course of romantic relationships while ambivalence behaviors decrease gradually over even longer periods of time (i.e., over the entire time course from casual dating to marriage), which suggests continuing gradual differentiation in the quality of exchange between close and other relationships.

As a final example, despite the evidence already cited that people very quickly decide to follow communal or exchange norms, Berg's (1984) study on roommates provides intriguing additional evidence that with time relationships may either become increasingly communal or that the exact form of responsive behavior may change over time. Berg asked subjects at both the beginning and end of a semester to list things that their roommate had done to help them as well as things that their roommate *could* do that would help them the most, regardless of whether he or she had done them. From the responses two indices were formed: a "Total Positive" index obtained by summing the number of things subjects listed in response to the first question and a "Desires Met" index, calculated by counting the number of times roommates actually did those things that subjects said would help most. Early in the semester, Berg found significant correlations between roommates' scores on the first measure but not the second measure. In contrast, at the end of the semester he found significant correlations between roommates' scores on the second measure but not the first measure. He pointed out that this may indicate that subjects were becoming increasingly communally oriented over time; in other words, early in the relationship roommates may have been at least somewhat concerned with following exchange norms and maintaining a balance in the amount of benefits they gave each other. By the spring, however, the relationship may have shifted to a communal basis, concern with equal amounts of exchange may have lessened, and in its place a "communal" concern with providing those things the other would find most helpful may have developed. Alternatively, subjects could have been following communal norms at both times and attempting to be responsive. Early in the year, however, roommates may not know exactly what one another's needs and desires were. Consequently, the best way to indicate responsiveness may have been to maintain equality in their exchanges. Later in the year as their knowledge of one another's needs increased, they concentrated on fulfilling these needs rather than on equating the *total* number of things they did for each other. In either case, differentiation continued after the initial few days of the relationship, in the adherence to communal norms and/or in the form used to demonstrate responsiveness.

Some changes occur quite rapidly. Although some aspects of close relationships may evolve gradually, the major point of this chapter remains the same; that is, given the right set of circumstances (for example, that the person is available and motivated to form new close relationships and that the other either responds to the person or has initiated an interaction indicating his or her availability), immediate or very quick differences in the nature of social exchange result. It seems likely that the norms governing the giving and receiving of benefits, the amount of exchange, the diversity of exchange, and even such things as thinking about oneself and the other as a "unit" and the relationship being very intrinsically satisfying are types of differentiation that can occur in the first few hours of relationship

formation. These types of differentiation are probably quite interdependent. Exactly which aspect of behavior changes first may vary, but once one aspect changes the others may very rapidly follow. After all, once a person acts in one way that is appropriate to a close relationship, this may indicate to the other that a close relationship is desired. If the other responds in kind, both members of the relationship, knowing the entire set of behaviors appropriate to close relationships, may quickly exhibit many of those behaviors. Consequently, it may well be that differentiation of friendships and romantic relationships from other relationships along many dimensions occurs in the first hours, as suggested by the studies on the communal-exchange distinction. It may then continue fairly quickly over the next few weeks (Hays, 1984, 1985) and gradually after that (Braiker & Kelley, 1979; Hays, 1984, 1985).

Concluding Comments

In thinking about this chapter, we felt that the small amount of existing literature in the area of relationship formation was weighted too heavily toward suggesting that the development of intimate or close relationships was very gradual. In contrast to that view, our own work, as well as recent work of others, led us to believe that many aspects of close relationships develop quite quickly. Thus, we took as our goal for this chapter putting that literature together and making a case for there being some quickly apparent differences in close versus other relationships. We hope we have succeeded. In the process we also have tried to make a case that researchers should not dismiss previous "one-shot" research on attraction too quickly. The variables found to affect initial attraction may be crucial determinants of initial differentiation in the nature of social exchange. That differentiation, in turn, may set the course for the entire relationship. Nonetheless, we hope that this chapter will encourage rather than discourage longitudinal study of relationships. Much more longitudinal work is needed before we can feel confident about the claims made in this chapter as well as chart the exact course of relationship development.

On what factors should such longitudinal research focus? Clearly, researchers need to track all aspects of social exchange and examine the development of relationships other than those between college students. After all, college students are probably more open to forming new friendships and/or new romantic relationships than are most other groups. Thus, it may be that by studying primarily college students, researchers have found evidence of friendships and romantic relationships developing more quickly than will turn out to be the case for other populations. Finally, it seems important to track the development of relationships that would clearly *not* be termed close, for example, relationships between employers and employees, as well as the development of friendships and romantic

relationships. To understand how relationships such as friendships and romantic relationships are *differentiated* from other types of relationships across time, the development of nonintimate as well as intimate relationships must be followed.

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